ResearchGate

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313718111

Sects, Cults, and New Religions: An Introduction

Chapter · January 2014

CITATIONS
0

READS
16,503

2 authors, including:

Carole Cusack
The University of Sydney
562 PUBLICATIONS **835** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

All content following this page was uploaded by Carole Cusack on 15 February 2017.

The user has requested enhancement of the downloaded file.

Sects, Cults, and New Religious Movements: An Introduction

Danielle Kirby (RMIT University)
Carole M. Cusack (University of Sydney)

Introduction

The guiding principles for this four-volume collection of reprinted articles and chapters are straightforward and were reached by consensus among the editors. First, in addition to those classics that are rightly known and respected, we have sought to also include studies of an equal standard that have been neglected or have otherwise failed to reach the deserved broad audience, usually as a result of initial publication in obscure journals or small print-run edited volumes and conference proceedings. Second, we have aimed for a balance between the usual emphasis upon either a broad theoretical orientation, or conversely, a bias towards case studies, with an equal and complementary focus on both. Third, we have selected works that are representative of the academic study of new religious movements (NRMs), with a range of methodological approaches being included, including sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, and psychology. Thus, we hope that the methodological rigour of the content is matched by the empirical richness of the panoply of new religions examined.

Yet, this collection is perhaps unique in that it does not explicitly genuflect towards the traditional themes of NRMs. Violence, sexuality, mass suicide and murder, are not, for instance, central themes in this collection, nor are such lurid topics used as categories or principles for arranging content. Media sensationalism, so-called deviant behaviours, and alleged 'brainwashing' and deprogramming are neither motifs to emphasise, nor subjects that should affect the perceived validity of the academic field (Dart 1997: 144-152). Part of this decision is a simple reflection of the shifting concerns of the study of NRMs: the issues confronting the scholar of new religions in the twenty-first century are distinctly (and rightly) different from the concerns that preoccupied the field in the 1970s and 1980s. Similarly, while there is undoubtedly a perception in some quarters that these are precisely the issues that make the field of study one worthy of interest, the numbers of new religions that evidence such anti-social beliefs and behaviours is vastly outweighed by the numbers of those which do not.

J. Gordon Melton has noted that in the 1960s when the study of NRMs emerged scholars treated these 'sects' and 'cults' as a problem; they tried to explain why these movements had come into being, and 'what was wrong that people were turning to new religions?' (Melton 2007: 109). He argues that in the twenty-first century the context of both NRMs themselves and the academic study of NRMs has altered, and it is now understood that 'the emergence of new religions seems to be one sign of a healthy and free society, and we can now see everywhere that the slowing of the process of the formation of new religions occurs only where the suppressive powers of the state are called to bear' (Melton 2007: 109). This approach assumes that there is a human tendency to develop new versions of the meaning-making narratives and practices that may be termed 'religions', throughout history and in different cultural and geographical contexts. In keeping with such an understanding, this reference collection seeks to offer a comparatively balanced approach to the material, and seeks

to avoid a potentially incongruous sensationalism that scholars tacitly perpetuate by the use of these categories.

Issues of Representativeness in the Study of NRMs

One of the slightly alarming findings of this undertaking has been the identification of significant gender bias at play within the scholarship on NRMs. Key theoretical proposals have, with the important exception of the works of Eileen Barker, been almost totally dominated by men. Conversely, analyses of sexuality, studies of the family and children, reflections on gender, and investigation of social relations in general, are overwhelmingly undertaken by female scholars (see, for example, Palmer 2004). This has posed something of a difficulty in regards to the collection of pertinent texts, in particular for the fourth volume. While in no way desirous of perpetuating such a gendered approach, the dearth of alternative scholarly selections largely forced our hands. In this, rather than compromising with uncomfortable fits or improbable representation, we have instead chosen to highlight this issue in the hope that straightforwardly acknowledging this tendency goes some way towards lessening its habitual presence while neither valorising nor tactfully 'disappearing' the problem.

Another important feature of the study of NRMs, and one reflected here, is the extensive nature of the field. We have largely confined our topics and analysis to material originating in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries in this collection. Such treatment is appropriate to the scale and scope of the phenomena, and the necessity of setting boundaries for selection; in this, it is not a reflection on the parameters of the field, nor is it by any means an indication of any limitation of the frame within which NRMs occur. The nature of new religion, be it in relation to movements, groups, or more personalised and idiosyncratic forms, is that its newness is dependant upon its context, irrespective of the time period in question. Indeed, the historical record is replete with examples of forms of religiosity that would comfortably fall within our conception of 'new'. Scholars have profitably applied models from the study of NRMs to early Christianity (Esler 1995), and in the ancient world Egyptian and Persian mystery religions, such as the cults of Isis and Mithras, functioned in much the same way as Buddhism and Hinduism do in the contemporary West, that is as religions that were 'old' in their original geographical and social context, but 'new' in the societies in which they had been recently introduced (Batchelor 1994). Siddhartha Gautama's initiating of the Buddhist religion was effectively a reform of the Vedic tradition, as was Jainism, associated with Buddha's contemporary Vardhamana Mahavira (Schwartz 1975). 'New religions' is both a contextual and relational designation. Originating in scholarly usage from the emergence of the Japanese *shin shukyo* after World War I (Schiffer 1955), the term has become preferable, in academic circles at least, as an alternative to the pejorative 'cult'. If treated as a relational category, NRMs are intrinsically embedded within their broader historical, cultural, social, and political context and resist essentialist summation. We take here the category of 'new' in its broader sense. Thus, a new religion is not necessarily dependant upon a recent chronological origin (though, of course, some of the included case studies are very recent formations), but rather our focus is on a religion or movement's newness of context, praxis, or emphasis. When viewed in this light, the scale and scope of non-traditional, atypical, innovative, and downright deviant forms of religiosity are truly staggering.

The pan-historical applicability of the category is complemented by geographical specificity, as new religions are emplaced and have meaning in physical as well as temporal locales. This is a valuable aspect of new religion studies that assists us to understand Transcendental Meditation (TM) or the Baha'i faith, for instance, as new religious phenomena in their occurrence within their 'new' Western geographies; the same conditions apply to Pentecostal mega-churches in Africa, Buddhist meditation centres in the United States, and Chabad Lubavitch centres in Europe and Asia (Maoz and Bekerman 2010). From the essentialised 'sacred' geographies of Mircea Eliade (Eliade 1958) to the most pragmatic of everyday physical environs, new religions and movements emerge within very precise locations. Expanding on this specificity, the issue of virtualisation of religion and the emergence of geographically dispersed and digitally supported communities of belief is equally important within twenty-first century (Kirby 2013). Yet such an approach does not undermine the importance of the new religion's locale, but simply recognises digital environments as extended experiential spaces for communal activity; thus, virtual pilgrimage is not a poor substitute for the 'real thing' but is, in fact, a different kind of 'real thing' itself (MacWilliams 2002).

New Religions, Parent Traditions, and 'Mainstream' Religions

Focusing on the complex relations that exist between parent traditions and the 'new' religions that arise from them, and the interactions that these new religions have with dominant or mainstream traditions, the field is further revealed as an extensive and intricate domain. New religion as a category is, as noted, not limited to particular geographies and temporalities, but individual instances of new religions most certainly are. 'New' is not a permanent attribution, but rather a statement of location with regards to a parent tradition and socio-cultural context. Thus Mormonism, once held to be the quintessential American NRM, has across its almost 200 year history become progressively more comfortable within its host cultures and found increasing, if not widespread, acceptance (Swatos 2012; Stark 1984; Bowman 2011).

New religions can, and do, emerge in all shapes and sizes. Significant reinterpretations of the so-called 'great' traditions (or 'world religions') of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism have formed the ideological premise of a great number of NRMs, some of which are recognisable offspring with strong 'family resemblances', and some of which have diverged so far from the original tradition as to seem entirely unrelated. These include Philip and Karen Berg's Kabbalah Centre, Moses David's Children of God (now The Family International), Western Sufism, Sokka Gakkai, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Baha'i, and Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. Yet so-called 'little' traditions also give rise to a multitude of new manifestations of the religious impulse; in the Pacific there are literally hundreds (perhaps thousands) of local new spiritual movements, from generic cargo cults in Papua New Guinea to the tribes of Tanna, an island of Vanuatu, who worship Prince Philip as a god (Loeliger and Trompf 1985; Lindstrom 1989). Ethnic traditions too often serve as a foundation for new religious exploration: Ásatrú and the Odinist traditions, for instance, are forms of sacralised nationalism resting upon their country of origin's indigenous traditions, generally understood to be Scandinavia or Iceland (Kaplan 1996). The worship of Prince Philip on Tanna began, appropriately enough, in the 1960s, was intensified as a result of the royal visit of Prince Philip and Queen Elizabeth II in 1974, and points to the influence

of globalisation and the capacity for change in indigenous cultures when they encounter Western modernity. The great flourishing of Afro-Caribbean religions (which includes movements as diverse as Candomble, Vodun, Rastafarianism, and Kumina) arising from the context of slavery and exploitative European colonialism, is further testimony to the creativity and adaptability of subaltern populations faced by modernity and oppression (Murrell 2010). The reverse is true of revived Nordic Paganism (and in fact all revived European Paganisms), where modern Westerners embrace a bygone world that is perceived as more authentic, in reaction to the perceived inauthenticity of the modern, technological world. The case of 'dark green religion', the spirituality fostered through deep ecology, likewise relies heavily upon indigenous knowledges and readings of the world, albeit sometimes in ways that appear to shift from cultural sharing and exchange into new forms of appropriation and imperialism (Taylor 1997).

For all that many new religions have a clear parent tradition in a major world religion, there are also a great many that hold their strongest familial resemblance to less traditional sites of religious affiliation. Jungian notions drawn from both archetypal and analytic psychology are an integral element of much New Age thought and various forms of self-spirituality, such as those drawing upon the Human Potential Movement (Heelas 1996; Hanegraaff 1998). Likewise, invented traditions holding a strong, and often explicit, relationship to fictional narratives have been, from the late 1950s onward, not unusual sites for new religious expressions and experiences (Cusack 2010). In terms of relationships with mainstream society and normative religious institutions, the majority of 'little tradition' NRMs are suspected of triviality, anti-modernism, and deviance, and invented religions and psychologised self-spiritualities alike are generally rejected as inauthentic, shallow, and frivolous. This misperception tends to arise as a result of an (inexplicit) assessment of all religions against the yardstick of Christianity. New religions lose out doubly as a result; the further they are from the Christian model, the more likely it is that they will be deemed to not be a 'real' religion; yet the closer they are to the Christian model, the more likely they are to be deemed a perversion of the 'true' message. This question of authenticity and its varying discourses, of what constitutes 'real' religion, and what does not, lies at the heart of the study of new religions, and indeed has far reaching implications both within the academy, as well as in the broader social, political, and cultural milieus.

Studying New Religions: Different From/The Same as the Study of Religions?

As noted above, the study of new religions is not a new undertaking, though the sub-discipline as a dedicated field of scholarship can be comfortably seen as emerging during the middle decades of the 20th century (Introvigne 2004: 980). Although the emergence of (new) religion as a theme was present as an area of interest within a number of fields prior to the 1950s, after World War II the Western world underwent various social and cultural upheavals, of which a highly visible proliferation of alternative forms of religiosity was a significant part. Therefore there was an increasing need for specialists in the study of these new and alternative forms of religion to exist, not just as observers of phenomena, but also as a countervailing force against an often highly critical normative culture. In these early days of the sub-discipline, the dangerousness of deviant beliefs was often emphasised within the broader culture (Barker 1994), and the inauthenticity of these 'new' beliefs taken as a

serious challenge to social ethics, if not outright regarded as a major risk to the health and wholeness of the social body. In the late twentieth century, and indeed to the present, charges such as 'brainwashing' have been regularly levelled at various new religions with potentially serious ramifications for particular groups. The dread of Satanism, and its conflation with murder and child abuse within the 1980s, for instance, was manifest not just in a hyperbolic media but also reflected within governmental domains (Jenkins 2004; Richardson and Bromley 1991). The rhetorical power and media savvy of the anti-cult movement, particularly within Great Britain and North America (Shupe 2008), also helped shape this debate, due to its vociferous condemnation of all new and alternative religion. Anti-cult figures like ex-Moonie Steven Hassan asserted the validity of brainwashing as an explanation for conversion and adherence to NRMs, while scholars and courts dismissed the concept as (Hassan 2012; Richardson 1991).

The discipline itself was, as a result, formed at least in part to understand and fairly represent, from a critical distance, the rights of those un-represented or under-represented beliefs that stood in contra-distinction to the prevailing cultural tendencies of their circumstances. There is at root a sense of advocacy within the discipline: not a promotion of the value or lack thereof of particular new beliefs, but rather a generalised support for their ethical inclusion within the spectrum of behaviours we classify as 'religious'. Attempts to set limitations on understandings of religion that include 'religion we like' and exclude those seen less favourably, 'religion we do not like', have been as incoherent as they are risible. There is no etic position that can successfully defend the validity of the doctrinal basis, for example, the Roman Catholic Church, against that of, say, revived Paganism, in terms of their intrinsic value or epistemological validity. Modern Paganism's lack of authenticated sacred texts is paralleled in any number of indigenous traditions: to dismiss a religion on these grounds would therefore prohibit the inclusion of any number of ethnic religions (Bogen and Goldstein 2009). Likewise, the non-hierarchial structures and distributed communities that are commonplace among indigenous religions are increasingly familiar within late modernity; thus, neither can this status be used as a basis for exclusion. Charges of chronological newness are regularly refuted on the basis of a persistent folk tradition of wise women and village witches (Hutton 2001). The articulation of the Wiccan tradition at the hands of Gerald Gardner (1994-1964) can likewise be paralleled by the concretisation of the biblical canon in the late Roman period. Few realise that the first time the canon was articulated was the Festal Letter of Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria, written and circulated at Easter in 367 CE (Metzger 1997: 9). Even social functional approaches that focus upon the necessity of good works, for instance, are refuted by modern Paganism's concerns for environmental respect and co-habitation with all creatures, and, in another context, the Holy Order of MANS's dedication to charitable works (Lucas 1995). In summation, short of the adoption of a theological position (which endorses the acception of empirically-unverifiable essentialism), there is little reason for acepting a 'hierarchical' approach to new religions *vis-à-vis* 'real religions'. From an external vantage point, religions cannot be judged substantively as 'better' or 'more real' than other religions.

These same dynamics are also visible in the scholarly discussion of UFO and alien-based religions, the theologies of which derive in the main from the Theosophical tradition and are married in creative ways to popular cultural forms, principally

science fiction novels and films (Partridge 2003). The foundation of the Theosophical Society (the teachings of which synthesised Western and Eastern religions with an idiosyncratic understanding of science) in New York in 1875 by Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), a Russian emigree and medium, and Colonel Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907), an American Civil War veteran and global champion of Sri Lankan Buddhism, was in many senses the fountainhead of all new religions in the West (Melton 2004: 16-35). The Chicago Parliament of the World's Religions in 1893 further exposed the West to 'Eastern' religion, featuring representatives from Hinduism (including P. C. Majumdar of the Brahmo Samaj, and Swami Vivekananda, who later founded the reformist Ramakrishna Math), Buddhism, and the new religions of Theosophy and Christian Science. The Buddhist delegation, which included the charismatic Sri Lankan Anagarika Dharmapala and the Japanese Zen teacher Shaku Soyen, was among the more influential participant groups, along with the popular Vivekananda (Ziolkowski 1993).

The effect of the Parliament of the World's Religions was to stimulate American interest in Buddhism, largely due to the major role played by Zen scholar Daisetz T. Suzuki who was resident in the United States from 1897 to1909. He later taught at Columbia University from 1955-1957, where is met the Beat writers Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg (Prebish 1999). The Theosophical Society's teachings similarly became popular and in the 1930s Guy Ballard founded the 'I AM' movement, which is claimed as the first UFO religion. I AM, which referred to 'Ascended Masters', was essentially a Theosophical system, but extra-terrestrials were among the Masters who advised Ballard via mediumistic activity (Whitsel 2003: 23-26). In the 1950s the UFO 'contactee' movement intersected with popular cultural narratives like 'The Day The Earth Stood Still' (1951), the classic UFO messiah film that posited an enlightened alien, Klaatu, who landed on Earth to warn humanity of the possibility of a nuclear holocaust, but who was violently killed by hostile humans and departed Earth after his resurrection (Etherden 2005). In the wake of this pioneering effort UFO religions including the Aetherius Society (founded by George King in 1954), the Summit Lighthouse (founded by Mark Prophet in 1958), Heaven's Gate (founded by Marshall Herff Applewhite and Bonnie Lu Nettles in the early 1970s), and Raelism (founded by Claude Vorilhon, aka Rael, in the mid 1970s). These numerically small, quite 'fringe' groups are nevertheless an important sub-category of NRMs. This is because they are a site in which crucial demotic debates about spirituality, supra-empirical beings, popular culture, science, and (for academics) the category of religion itself, are played out in the glare of media mockery, anti-cult excoriation, and the very real need for scholarly objectivity and integrity (Partridge 2003). The challenge of UFO and alien-based religions is the challenge of familiar motifs that for the majority are unlikely and implausible, yet for some have become both likely and plausible; the reversal of the margins and the centre.

The Church, Sect, Cult Typology in the Twenty-First Century

The idea that UFO groups are religions, whatever that may mean, challenges scholars to grapple with the models that we customarily use to 'explain' our field of interest. For example, even the distinction between viewing religion from the comparatively nuanced positions of studying religion and studying new religion reveals some of the importance of the articulation of the research area of NRMs as a distinctive subfield. The church-sect-cult typology of Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923), for instance, which

was developed in the early part of the 20th century, has had remarkable staying power (Troeltsch 1960). Owning various forms and numerous incarnations, this typology has shaped the study of religions both new and traditional. Not only in terms of its association with mysticism and individualism, but more importantly emphasising its non-institutional 'outsider' status, the 'cult' of Troeltsch's typology is, in many cases, the 'new religion' that scholars employ in the present. The Christian church is situated at the heartland in this framing, with mainline denominations as normative. The sect and cult, respectively, move towards the periphery of the typology, as NRMs tend to be marginalised in the contemporary world. This typology has been of great value in the study of religion as a whole, and its importance cannot be overstated. However, as certain scholars have opined, it has also proven to be somewhat of a hindrance to scholars of new religions, offering little flexibility in either theoretical or empirical terms (Bromley and Melton, 2012: 4). Given that most all 'new' religions fall under the 'cult' as defined by Troeltsch, the category in a sense stops where scholars of NRMs seek to start. The typology, in terms of the definition of 'cult', does not speak to these 'new' and 'alternative' forms of religiosity except as a horizon of deviance to denote a periphery.

Perhaps more important, however, is the fact it is not for scholars of religion to say what is authentic religion and conversely what is not. Scholars can speak to what particular religions believe, the way participants may construct the world, the ethical imperatives by which practice is informed, or the values that are accorded certain behaviours. They can explore a fidelity or flexibility to stated doctrinal concerns, or the particulars of acquiescence and deviance from normative cultures. These are etic concerns, and proper to scholarship. The emic concerns of particular religions, however, cannot guide the academic study of religion: designating 'authentic' and 'inauthentic' religion moves scholarship out of observation and into participation.

Thematics in the Study of New Religions

The volumes in this series are organised according to four popular thematics in the study of NRMs. The first volume addresses questions of origin, emergence into the public eye, charismatic leadership and millennial expectations, and the academic frameworks that are most commonly used to interpret these phenomena (Bromley 2004). The role of texts is also important, with insights into the myriad ways new religions construct 'sacred histories' and accord certain writings the status of scripture (Hammer and Rothstein 2012). The second volume takes up the question of conversion to new religions, the types of structures that new converts typically find themselves part of, the attitudes to society manifested by a range of new religions, and finally the issues of apostasy and loss of faith in such new revelations.

The third volume is the most overtly theoretical, in that the discussion of the context of new religions tends to shade heavily into broader discourses regarding the nature of modernity (Melton 2004). This volume focuses upon the relationships between NRMs and their 'mainstream' host cultures, exploring the category itself within the academy, issues of secularisation and sacralisation, and in relation to particular spheres of engagement such as political, legal, and cultural terrains. In the final volume, the primary concern is with how people engage with relationships within NRMs, emphasising particularly familial and sexual relations, but also exploring religious contexts of media, health, and lifestyle, as well as specific issues arising from race,

politics, and globalisation.

References

Barker, Eileen (1994) 'But is it a Genuine Religion?' *Religion and the Social Order*, 4: 97-110.

Batchelor, Stephen (1994) *The Awakening of the West: The Encounter of Buddhism and Western Culture*, Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.

Bogen, David Skillen and Leslie Goldstein (2009) 'Culture, Religion, and Indigenous People', *Maryland Law Review*, 69: 48-65.

Bowman, Matthew (2011) 'Mormonism and its Historians: The State of the Field', *Religion Compass*, 5: 720-730.

Bromley, David G. (2004) 'Perspective: Whither New Religions Studies?' *Nova Religio*, 8/2: 83-97.

Bromley, David G. and J. Gordon Melton (2012) 'Reconceptualizing Types of Religious Organization', *Nova Religio*, 15: 4-28.

Cusack, Carole M. (2010) *Invented Religions: Imagination, Fictoin and Faith,* Farnham and Burkington,VT: Ashgate.

Dart, John (1997) 'Covering Conventional and Unconventional Religion: A Reporter's View', *Review of Religious Research*, 39/2: 144-152.

Eliade, Mircea (1958) *Patterns in Comparative Religion,* London: Sheed and Ward.

Esler, Philip F. Ed. (1995) *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in its Context*, London and New York: Routledge.

Etherden, Mathew (2005) '*The Day the Earth Stood Still*: 1950s Sci-Fi, Religion and the Alien Messiah,' *Journal of Religion and Film*, 9/2, www.unomaha.edu/jrf/Vol9No2/EtherdenEarthStill.htm. Accessed December 10, 2009.

Hammer, Olav and Mikael Rothstein (2012) 'Canonical and extracanonical Texts in New Relgiions', in Olav Hammer and Mikael Rothstein (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to New Religious Movements*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hanegraaff, Wouter (1998) *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought,* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Heelas, Paul (1996) *The New Age Movement: the celebration of the self and the sacralization of modernity,* Oxford: Blackwell.

Hutton R. (2001) *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft,* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Introvigne, Massimo (2004) 'The Future of New Religions', *Futures*, 36: 979-990.

Jenkins, Philip (2004) 'Satanism and Ritual Abuse', in James R. Lewis (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements,* Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 221-242.

Kaplan, Jeffrey (1996) 'The Reconstruction of the Asatru and Odinist Traditions', in James R. Lewis (ed.), *Magical Religion and Modern Witchcraft,* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 193-236.

Kirby, Danielle (2013) *Fantasy and Belief: Alternative Religions, Popular Narratives and Digital Cultures*, Sheffield and Bristol, CT: Equinox.

Lindstrom, Lamont (1989) 'Charisma and the Production of Messages on Tanna (Vanuatu)', *Religion*, 19/4: 377-397.

Loeliger, Carl and Garry Trompf. Eds (1985) *New Religious Movements in Melanesia*, Suva: University of the South Pacific and University of Papua New Guinea.
Lucas, Phillip Charles (1995) *The Odyssey of a New Religion: The Holy Order of MANS From New Age to Orthodoxy*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
MacWilliams, Mark (2002) 'Virtual Pilgrimages on the Internet', *Religion*, 32: 15-335.
Maoz, Darya and Zvi Bekerman (2010) 'Searching for Jewish Answers in Indian Resorts: The Postmodern Traveler', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37/2: 423-439.
Melton, J. Gordon (2007) '*Perspective* New New Religions: Revisiting a Concept', *Nova Religio*, 10/4: 103-112.
Melton, J. Gordon (2004) 'An Introduction to New Religions', in James R. Lewis (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements*, New York: Oxford University Press, 17-35.
Metzger, Bruce M. (1997) *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development and Significance*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Murrell, Nathaniel Samuel (2010) *Afro-Caribbean Religions: An Introduction to Their Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Traditions*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Palmer, Susan Jean (2004) 'Women in New Religious Movements', in James R. Lewis (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements*, New York: Oxford University Press, 378-385.
Partridge, Christopher. Ed. (2003) *UFO Religions*, London and New York: Routledge.
Prebish, Charles (1999) *Luminous Passage: The Practice and Study of Buddhism in America*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
Richardson, James T. and David G. Bromley (1991) *The Satanism Scare*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
Richardson, James T. (1991) 'Cult/Brainwashing Cases and Freedom of Religion', *Journal of Church and State*, 33: 55-74.
Saner, Emin (2012) 'I Was A Moonie Cult Leader', *The Guardian*, Monday 3 September, at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/sep/03/moonie-cult-leader. Accessed 28 April 2013.
Schiffer, Wilhelm (1955) 'New Religions in Postwar Japan', *Monumenta Nipponica*, 11: 1-14.
Schwartz, Benjamin I. (1975) 'The Age of Transcendence', *Daedalus*, 104/2: 1-7.
Shupe, Anson D. and Susan E. Darnell (2008) *Agents of Discord: Deprogramming, Pseudo-science, and the American Anti-cult Movement,* New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.
Stark, Rodney (1984) 'The Rise of a New World Faith', *Review of Religious Research*, 26: 18-27.
Swatos, William H. (2012) 'The Function of "Church" in the Sociology of Religion in America', *Social Compass*, 59: 515-524.
Taylor, Bron (1997) 'Earthen Spirituality or Cultural Genocide?: Radical Environmentalism's Appropriation of Native American Spirituality', *Religion*, 27: 183-215.
Troeltsch E. (1960) *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches,* New York: Harper and Row.

Whitsel, Brad C. (2003) *The Church Universal and Triumphant: Elizabeth Clare Prophet's Apocalyptic Movement*, New York: Syracuse University Press.
Ziolkowski, Eric J. (1993) 'Waking Up From Akbar's Dream: The Literary Prefiguration of the Chicago's 1893 World's Parliament of Religions', *The Journal of Religion*, 73/1: 42-60.

View publication stats